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MARY ESPARSA

MS. ESPARSA: My name is Mary Esparsa and I'd like to say I could say that I'm a seventh generation American. The truth is I'm part of a generation of an extinct people, a people who no longer after myself and possibly my grandchildren will ever see and smell a binion that grows in the desolate of the desert. I love the desert, and for the west -- those in Back East that think that there's nothing here, I'd like to have them come for one day without a canteen of water and sustain themselves in the desert. That's what my parents have done and my grandparents and their grandparents before that.

In the desert is the binion who has saved us a little time I nut that actually came from Mexico. In the desert is the nopai, the green cactus who not only we have -- when we boil it to cook it, to eat it, we use the fine sap for our hair like a shampoo. In the desert is the yucca who we take the fine -- the finest point of that and use it to paint the pottery that our -- our parents have had. In the desert, a few kernels of corn will grow. In the desert, we have a few running animals that we've eaten and has sustained us, but those animals are no longer running because communities are growing and building and those animals have no where to go, so they come to our garbage cans.

I am sick and tired of the white lies, and it's interesting that the men that were here before us with their white caps saying "Yucca Yes" with their thousand dollar salaries, I've been here thirty some years. My children have gone to an elementary school, graduated here. My grandchildren are now in that same elementary school and they still don't have a swing in the back of that school yard to play with. Where are their -- where is the government's money that they're going to give us or have given us to have a place like this for my children to play? But I say, "Don't worry, son, because you have played in the trees. You don't need the swings," and they say, "It's not for us. It's for those who don't have it, who will never have it because they're living in a concrete jungle, and I say, "Basta!" When I say "basta," I mean enough.

Mother earth is sick and tired. I am tired. My granddaughter went to the Lead Museum and she saw the exhibit of my ancestors, and when she came back -- she had been so happy about that field trip and she came back and sat at my table and little tears were coming down her eyes, and I said, "Que pasa, mi jita?" what's the matter, honey? "Grandma, you know what? We went to a field trip and my little friend, they didn't let her go in." I said, "Why?" "Because she's not an American and she's going -- she's going to go tell the secrets that we saw." I said, "What secrets did you see, mi jita?" "I don't know. I don't know, something in the hall, but I don't know what it was about. We just saw things in a train and rocks and some type of mine where graphite is stored, but it's not that kind of a mine. They don't bring copper where we can spend pennies." I said, "Oh." I said, "Why did they send the little girl?" "I don't know. Abuelita, they told her she couldn't go in because she was not an American citizen. Can you believe that, Grandma? She's only 6 years old and they didn't let her go in." I said, "All right. I'm going to talk to your teacher and find out what happened." One thing led to another, forgot about it.

A year later, same little granddaughter comes and sits at my table with tears running down her eyes, and she says, "You know, Grandma. I went to the museum, the Lead Museum down the street from the library and I didn't know, Abuelita. I didn't know you were one of the ancient ones," and I said, "What? I'm not even a senior citizen yet and you're going to have me be ancient?"

And she said, "I saw you. I saw you, Abuelita. I saw you. There you were grinding the corn and the lady had hair like you and they told us these were the ancient ones. Grandma, I'm going to treat you with more respect from now on. I'm going to help you and I'm going to take up things and I'm not going to be so wasteful," and I say my government has lied so much to me, thank God in this time of the millennium that I have seen with my own eyes, I've heard with my own ears the deceit and the lies and I am so sick of it, that I fear for my little ones.

I don't know where I can run, where I can hide to protect them. I cannot put them in a bubble, and I see my Indian friend in that mountain in sunrise. Have you seen him laying there? There are times where I have actually seen him move, and I have seen my brothers on this side over here in the mountains where one time those mountains were like this and now they're tilted like that. I don't have to have a machine to tell me that mother earth is getting ready for something that's going to be so awesome and I say, "Que bueno," I think what goes around, comes around, and you cannot cover mother earth with concrete. I don't care what kind of concrete. It just took a little teeny weeny crack in the dyke and the water came. All it takes is a woman to open her legs a little bit, esta tiene, nine months of carne vaso.

We have carne vaso was healthy, but now and then, sol yunde molio, yes, we have healthy children. The lady that had her three babies, her little girls in California, thank God, praise the lord, hallelujah, 60-year-old daddy and a 57-year-old mama, three healthy little girls and they're healthy because she's harvesting the fruit from her own yard that not contaminated with all kinds of sprays and crap and junk like her sisters that had children that are coming out with a tail literally from behind, or three legs, whatever. All these mutated little babies being born in the farms because of the things that they have been exposed to that our government continues to -- to turn a blind eye to.

When I was a child, I remember my grandmother. Had she been alive today, she would be 107. They were on their way to New Mexico to Raton to attend a funeral in the '40s. They stopped in this little restaurant. I won't name the place or the map, and it's ironic that I see this white males all strong and buffed up. Sure they're older, but they still look fine, getting the thousand dollars, whatever they're getting over there, and I'm sure they have a lot of steaks everyday, but in this little restaurant in New Mexico at that time, my grandparents and my -- my parents stopped there to eat on their way to Raton. I remember when my grandmother came back from that trip, she -- she was not the same lady that left Northern Arizona. I am from Flagstaff. When she came back, it was a different lady. She said, "Hija, uradista sol salida dos veses en un dia. Mijitas, I have seen the sun come up twice in one day," and that's when they did the atomic blast.

You think their secrets weren't known before that? That man be in that restaurant knew everything that was going on. Why? Because he was Hispanic and the scientist came that in there to read and get a cup of coffee and fill their gas -- their cars with gas didn't know that this man could understand what they were saying? He understood everything they were saying. Everything the top scientist that came from Europe, he stopped there frequently. That man heard it all. When my grandmother came back, she said, Mejitás, I don't want you to get married, I don't want you to have children because they're not going to live to be adults." I said, Ay, Grandma don't be that way just because you had your fun, you don't want us to have some," and then I was a teen -- I wasn't quite a teenager and all of a sudden a bunch of Hispanic and Native American kids were hauled out of school. We all were sent out to the health department and had to get x-rayed. My -- my mother didn't even know what a damn x-ray was. They're going to see your bones. I said, "How are they going to see my bones?" She said, "Just put your hand on that light. Don't you see your bones? They're going to see them all at one time." And we said, "Well, why?" "Well maybe you didn't have enough bones. I don't know."

So there we go. No parents sign, nobody was told. We were just taken out of the schools and we were x-rayed. I'll never forget it. It didn't happen to me once. Three, four and five times in one month I was x-rayed, and my parents never knew about it, never were told. Later on when we had a reunion, some of those same kids, we talked about it. "Well, how come we were x-rayed?" I said, "Well, I'm going to find out now. Truth of Information Act says we can go see all those kind of things." That stuff was top secret, we won't get into it, and the health department "Well, those records when we moved from this department to that department, things got lost." Well, okay. Esta bien.

MR. LAWSON: Could I ask --

MS. ESPARSA: My dad, my uncles went to war. My brother went to Vietnam, agent orange, mendias, can't have no babies. I mean, this is a marine, a tough guy. My cousins went to the Persian Gulf, came back with otra freaire cosa. The majority of 'em came back alive, but they're dead because all kinds of crazy things happened to them in their bodies. When they left, they had children, and they were beautiful children. When they came back, they got together with ayisitas. None of those kids are normal, none of them. And that's all I can -- got to say is basta.